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BQA Memo 04-015

To: Adult Family Homes
Community Based Residential Facilities
Residential Care Apartment Complexes

AFH - 06
CBRF - 08
RCAC - 07

From: Kevin Coughlin, Chief
Assisted Living Section

Via: Cris Ros-Dukler, Director
Bureau of Quality Assurance

Safe Storage, Handling, and Use of Oxygen

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide guidance to providers on the safe storage, handling and use of oxygen in assisted living settings. Through the assisted living on-site inspection process conducted by staff in the Bureau of Quality Assurance (BQA), which include on-site reviews of community-based residential facilities (CBRFs), adult family homes (AFHs), and residential care apartment complexes (RCACs), the Bureau is discovering that consumers in these facilities have health care needs that are much more acute than they were three or four years ago. Assisted living facilities are admitting consumers with higher care needs and facilities are retaining residents whose care needs have increased as the residents have aged in place. Of concern with increased care, BQA has noticed an increased oxygen use for consumers in assisted living facilities.

NOTE: A facility's failure to ensure a safe environment related to the storage, handling and use of oxygen may result in the issuance of a deficiency or notice of finding.

SAFE STORAGE, HANDLING AND USE OF OXYGEN
(Assisted Living)

1. According to Wis. Admin. Code §§ HFS 83.21(4)(w), HFS 88.05(3)(b), and HFS 89.34(17), assisted living facilities are responsible for ensuring that they provide a safe environment for their residents or tenants. The use of oxygen equipment, its operation, maintenance, and testing must comply with all federal, state, and local codes.

2. Oxygen usage shall be in accordance with current industry standards. For example, but not inclusive, the Compressed Gas Association (CGA) has information available at www.cganet.com. Safe usage shall follow the manufacturers' recommendations, instructions or operating manual. Individuals who assume the responsibility for oxygen equipment and its use must be familiar with the hazards of oxygen, the operational characteristics of the equipment, and the precautions to be observed while using oxygen.
3. Oxygen cylinders in use must be secured in an upright position.
4. All oxygen cylinders not in use must be stored in an area that is well-ventilated and safe from environmental hazards, tampering, or the chance of accidental damage to the stem. If stored upright, cylinders must be secured. If stored horizontally, cylinders must be on a level surface where they will remain stationary.
5. The local fire department shall be made aware of the facility's use of oxygen and associated equipment. Each facility should implement the local fire department's recommendations on safe handling of oxygen.
6. Common hazards associated with oxygen are ignition or heating sources, i.e., furnaces, stoves, space heaters, smoking, open flames or electrical appliances.

If you have any questions regarding the safe storage, handling and use of oxygen, please contact the Regional Field Operations Supervisor for your region.

Northeastern Regional Office 200 N. Jefferson St., Suite 211 Green Bay, WI 54301 Office: (920) 448-5240 Supervisor: (920) 448-5338 Fax: (920) 448-5254	Counties Covered: Brown, Calumet, Door, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marquette, Outagamie, Ozaukee, Sheboygan, Waushara, Winnebago
Northern Regional Office 1853 N. Stevens, Suite B Rhineland, WI 54501 Office: (715) 365-2800 Supervisor: (715) 365-2816 Fax: (715) 365-2815	Counties Covered: Ashland, Bayfield, Florence, Forest, Iron, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Marinette, Menominee, Oconto, Oneida, Portage, Price, Shawano, Taylor, Vilas, Waupaca, Wood
Southeastern Regional Office 819 N. 6th St., Room 210 Milwaukee, WI 53203-1606 Office: (414) 227-2005 Supervisor: (414) 227-4565 Fax: (414) 227-3903	Counties Covered: Kenosha, Milwaukee, Racine, Walworth, Waukesha

Southern Regional Office 2917 International Lane, Suite 210 Madison, WI 53704 Office: (608) 243-2370 Supervisor: (608) 243-3868 Fax: (608) 243-2389	Counties Covered: Adams, Columbia, Crawford, Dane, Dodge, Grant, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Juneau, Lafayette, Richland, Rock, Sauk, Vernon, Washington
Western Regional Office 610 Gibson St., Suite 1 Eau Claire, WI 54701-3687 Office: (715) 836-4752 Supervisor: (715) 836-4029 Fax: (715) 836-2535	Counties Covered: Barron, Buffalo, Burnett, Chippewa, Clark, Douglas, Dunn, Eau Claire, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, Rusk, Sawyer, St. Croix, Trempealeau, Washburn

Sources:

- Guide for the Safe Storage, Handling, and Use of Liquid Oxygen in Health Care Facilities, 2nd Edition, Compressed Gas Association (CGA), Pamphlet CGQ P-2.7-2000.
- Transfilling of Liquid Oxygen to be used for Respiration, Compressed Gas Association (CGA), Pamphlet P-2.6-1983.
- NFPA 99 Health Care Facilities (1999 ed.) Chapter 8 – Gas Equipment.
- American Association of Respiratory Care at www.aarc.org